DEC. 2020

Connecting the DOTs

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PIERRE/FT. PIERRE BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT-PAGE 1

INNOVATION: 511 ROLL OUT - PAGE 1

THE SECRETARY'S CORNER - PAGE 2

2021-2024 STIP APPROVAL PROCESS - DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC - PAGE 3

STRATEGIC EXTERNAL
COMMUNICATION PLAN PAGE 4

TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION AWARDS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GRANTS - PAGE 4

CAN TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING BE BAD? - PAGES 5 & 6

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!
RETIREMENTS, NEW HIRES,
TRANSFERS, PROMOTIONS, &
LONGEVITY - PAGES 7-9



Pierre-Fort Pierre Bridge Replacement Project Highlights

To watch the latest presentation on the Pierre-Fort Pierre Bridge Replacement project, view the video on our Facebook page @southdakotadot.

If you would like a copy of the handout from the presentation, or to be added on the newsletter and updates email list, please send an email to bridgeinfo@projectsolutionsinc.com.

Below are photo renderings of the Lt. Commander John C. Waldron Memorial Bridge provided by Stantec.







The Latest in Innovation - SD511 Roll Out!

New Website: https://sd511.org/

Website users automatically redirected to the new site.

Mobile Apps continue to use SDDOT 511 - you may need to manually update.



The Secretary's Corner

Because the SDDOT is a large organization, at times we forget to recognize the vital role each person plays in providing a safe and effective public transportation system. I didn't want to miss the opportunity to publicly recognize and personally thank those who responded to and assisted with the Highway 38 bridge accident earlier this month.

As many of you may remember, the Highway 38 bridge (1.5 miles west of Salem) was closed due to flood damage in September 2019. The structural damage was significant enough to warrant the closure of the current structure with plans to build a new one in the upcoming summer months of 2021.

In May 2020, a temporary, portable, one lane structure was placed over the existing structure to allow the roadway to be reopened. The temporary structure remained open to one lane traffic until the night of Dec. 3, when an over-width vehicle attempted to navigate through the temporary structure. The vehicle was significantly wider than the temporary structure, causing the vehicle to strike and become wedged within the structure.

The impact caused significant damage to three interior sections and one end section of the structure. SDDOT maintenance crews immediately closed the roadway and started the repair on the temporary structure. The crews were able to remove the damaged portions, repair and/or replace the interior sections, and replace the damaged end section. The roadway was reopened for traffic in the morning of Dec. 10. This work was completed in an incredibly short amount of time considering the damage done to the structure.

Thank you to all who played a role in this team effort including Mitchell Region Bridge, Pierre Region Bridge (who helped procure the repair parts), Mitchell Area Maintenance, and the Office of Bridge Design. Photos below show the work done by the crews during the night. The newly repaired temporary structure (photo on right) will remain open to one-lane traffic until construction of the new structure begins this summer.







The Annual STIP Update (During a global Pandemic)

(Thanks to Levi Briggs, Jerry Ortbahn, Mark Leiferman, and Mike Behm for this STIP summary!)

The **Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)** is a planning tool used to identify projects over 8 years including 4 years of development and 4 years for construction. The annual STIP update is a 4-year project listing developed through coordination by the SDDOT and multiple governmental entities, public agencies, and interested parties. The program identifies highway and intermodal improvements to preserve, renovate, and enhance South Dakota's transportation system.

The development of the **2021-2024 STIP** was much different this year due to Covid-19. When instructed to work from home in March of 2020, we had to learn how to accomplish our daily tasks in a much different way. Every April, the Project Development (PD) Office holds two meetings, a preliminary programming meeting with Planning & Engineering Division staff and a formal programming meeting with Central Office, Region, and Area staff. With everyone on "lockdown" to "flatten the curve" we all met through Microsoft Teams. When you think of a conference call with approximately 50-60 people, you might think confusion and talking over one another might be the norm. However, other than a couple of "mic mute situations", a great discussion was had to draft the Tentative 2021-2024 STIP.

While we hoped the pandemic would be over soon (looking back that was wishful thinking) and we could hold SDDOT's annual Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Tribal Transportation and Planning District coordination meetings in addition to the annual four regional public STIP meetings in person, this was not the case. By the end of May, STIP development staff determined having inperson meetings would not be safe for staff or the public. SDDOT and MPO staff met in late May and SDDOT and Tribal Transportation officials were able to meet in mid-June via Teams or conference call to discuss the coordination of each agency's current and planned construction projects. There were great discussions concerning highway construction projects even if we could not meet in person.

During the last week of June, SDDOT presented the 2021-2024 Tentative STIP to each of the six Planning Districts in South Dakota using virtual methods. We found early on that not everyone had Microsoft Teams capability, but we overcame this issue by having each Planning District organize a "Google Zoom" meeting which allowed SDDOT staff, planning district staff, and members to discuss. The biggest challenge was to figure out how to conduct the four public meetings in each region. Different options to hold them virtually were considered and in the end, the best solution was to hold the meetings via conference call using Teams. This allowed the organizer the ability to mute individual callers or all callers at once and to have the control necessary to eliminate any "hot mic" moments. SDDOT also provided the option for the public to listen to the conference call via SD Public Broadcasting through their website. Since a conference call was used, there was not a way to visually present the 2021-2024 Tenative STIP to the public. This was overcome by posting a recorded Power Point presentation for each region on SDDOT's STIP webpage approximately one week prior to the public meetings. Mike Behm (P&E Director), Mark Leiferman (PD Program Manager), and all four Region Engineers (Mark Peterson, Aberdeen; Travis Dressen, Mitchell; Jason Humphrey, Pierre; and Todd Seaman, Rapid City) provided great presentations even if this was new territory for them.

Public meeting information was advertised through local print, digital media, written letters to elected officials, and SDDOT Facebook/Twitter accounts. The advertisement of the public meetings was the only thing that didn't change this year. New this year was a Powtoon, created by PD staff, advertising the public meetings to create more public interest. Without in-person public meetings, and with short notice to develop a different delivery method, SDDOT was still able to garner good public participation and received great comments to make better lives through better transportation.

2021-24 STIP & Interactive map: https://dot.sd.gov/projects-studies/planning/stip

Transportation Commission Awards Economic Development Grants

The South Dakota Transportation

Commission awarded just over \$4 million in economic development grants for infrastructure improvements to counties and smaller communities across South Dakota.

The economic development grant program funds, awarded at the November Transportation Commission meeting, improves roads leading to schools, main business areas, hospitals, grain elevators, and other economic areas in communities. Grants pay for 80 percent of the construction costs, up to a maximum of \$600,000.

"These grants are an important part of the department's overall grant program to assist local governments in improving their infrastructure across the state," says Interim Secretary Joel Jundt. "Without the funds from the Economic Development grants, some of these communities would not have the financial ability to improve access that fosters economic development and quality of life."

Communities receiving grant awards:

Agri-Business Grants:

Yankton County - \$600,000 Moody County - \$460,000

Community Access Grants:

City of Hot Springs - \$580,000 City of Hudson - \$600,000 City of Wessington Springs - \$600,000 City of Chancellor - \$600,000 City of Gregory - \$600,000

For more information, view press release on our website at https://dot.sd.gov/ or contact Paula Huizenga, 605-773-6253 or Doug Kinniburgh at 605-773-4284.

Strategic External Communication Plan Launched

After working with a consultant over the past couple of years; the South Dakota DOT completed its first official **Strategic External Communication Plan**.

The plan includes eight strategies based on research of SDDOT communication. The strategies are general approaches to accomplish the communication-specific goals and directly support the SDDOT Strategic Plan.

The objective of this strategic external communication initiative is to provide the SDDOT with a thorough, manageable, and trackable path to communicate effectively with all external stakeholders.

The strategies and tactics align with the larger strategic goals of the department and are crafted to deliver key messages to SDDOT's target audiences; as well as to encourage feedback. This two-way communication will help SDDOT continuously improve.

Our Mission - To efficiently provide a safe and effective public transportation system

Our Vision - Better lives through better transportation by being the best

You can find the **Strategic External Communication Plan** on our SDDOT Intranet site.

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Can too much of a good thing be bad? By Jason Humphrey, Pierre Region Engineer

As many of you know, I am a father of three wonderful children. Well, most of the time they are wonderful. Like most parents, I can think of a handful of occasions when I would trade them for a wooden nickel. A story for another day! Earlier this week when driving my youngest to school, I asked what she wanted for Christmas. Before getting out of my pickup, she finished her short list comprised of "I don't know" and "I can't think of anything",

All parents understand how hard it is to shop for kids, especially without a list. Shopping for gifts gets harder each year my kiddos get older. Toys and gadgets aren't the same as they were when I was a kid 20 (or so) years ago. In my day, Tik Toks were sounds on clocks. I recall the good old days. I had a Christmas list that was longer than my arm, and Santa was always pretty good to me, obviously because I was a good kid. I also recall my folks saying, "Jason, too much of anything, even a good thing, can be bad." I didn't really understand their meaning until I was older.

Today I was trying to catch up on email after spending a day with one of our maintenance crews, I realized I had well over 100 emails to read. I am a fan of email and feel it is a wonderful communication tool. However, after seeing my full inbox, it reminds me of what my parents tried telling me so many years ago: Too much of a good thing can be bad. In this case, too many emails can be bad. I went through my list, and when it came right down to it, I only had a handful of emails that needed action.

It made me think about all the emails sent across the DOT, and the time taken to read unnecessary email that could be used much more productively. I thought I would share some of my thoughts on email etiquette. (You have to keep reading my article to the next page)!



Since Santa is watching, I should be honest and tell you that most of these great email tips were "borrowed" from the Internet.

CONNECTING THE DOTS | DEC. 2020

Can too much of a good thing continued ...

Email etiquette tips:

Use a clear and concise subject line.

If your subject line is vague or overly casual, the recipient may delete or overlook your email.

A clear subject line will also help you find that email a week or month from now if you need it.



Know when to pick up the phone.

If the email string turns into a conversation with several responses back and forth, its best to make a quick call or schedule a short meeting.

Always keep your email professional.

The tone of the email can be easily misunderstood by the reader.

Double check who you are sending your email to.

Heide Olson-Todd County teacher, Heidi Olson-USD teacher or Heidi Olson-DOT HR Manager?

Be cautious with "Reply All".

Replying "thanks" to 30 people, when intended for one, creates 29 unnecessary emails. **Quick factoid...** If you hit "reply all" on an all-staff DOT email and everyone spends 15 seconds opening, reading, and deleting your response, you have just consumed 4 hours of time that DOT staff could be working on something else.

Double check that you have attached that document.

No one likes the second email saying "Oops, forgot the attachment."

DO NOT USE ALL CAPS, LARGE BOLD TEXT, OR BRIGHT COLOR IN YOUR EMAIL. IT LOOKS LIKE YOU ARE SCREAMING AT PEOPLE. ©

Respect other people's time.

Remember your priorities may not be the same as theirs. Don't call someone, or show up at their desk, 3.48 seconds after hitting send to ask if they read your email yet!

Email is a very effective tool to do our jobs better, but if we don't use proper etiquette with coworkers, we get too much of a good thing.

I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas, and if any of you have gift ideas for a 5th grade girl, I'll gladly take them.

Employee Spotlight

As we recreate our monthly SDDOT newsletter, we are excited to highlight employee accomplishments. In the December issue, we have highlighted retirements, new hires, transfers, promotions and longevity over the past year.

Please feel free to share **personal news** such as marriages, babies, and other noteworthy achievements via email to julie.stevenson@state.sd.us.

The **Connecting the DOT's** newsletter is shared internally with staff via email as well as externally with the public on our website. We will start highlighting staff personal celebrations in our January newsletter. If you had previously shared a birth announcement, wedding, trip photo, etc. that wasn't published this past year, please feel free to send an updated photo or details for our January issue!

Congratulations to all who retired in 2020! Name, City (Years of Service)

Randy Vetter, Bison (10)
Robert Longbons, Pierre (31)
Karen Olson, Pierre (40)
Harold Harrenga, Estelline (27)
Robert Watts, Rapid City (20)
Jeffry Hrabanek, Winner (27)
Alice Whitebird, Pierre (35)
Larry Hoffman, Plankinton (21)
Cordell Rudolph, Lead (11)
Janice Talley, Pierre (43)
Perry Steiger, Mobridge (5)
Ted Bryant, Summerset (13)

Gregory Fuller, Ft. Pierre (39)
Marliss Dean, Pierre (44)
John Hieb, Aberdeen (4)
Paul Hill, Belle Fourche (9)
Mavis Tooker, Aberdeen (45)
Raymond McLaughlin, Custer (29)
David Abbas, Lennox (27)
James Schwartz, Gregory (49)
Lisa Donner, Pierre (31)
Loren Haynes, Martin (25)
Darin Bergquist, Pierre (24)

Linda Lutz, Mobridge (30)
Jeffrey Trouton, Deadwood (9)
William Englehart, Pierre (36)
Bernie Clocksin, Pierre (32)
Tim Bintliff, Hill City (33)
Steven Ryan, Pierre (33)
David Gaddis, Garretson (3)
Dale Albright, Clark (21)
Maxie Goetz, Selby (15)
Bill Gardner, Winner (21)
Ricky Farris, Winner (19)

Our thoughts and prayers are with the family, friends, and co-workers of the SDDOT employees who passed away in 2020.

Boyd Poppen, Aberdeen (26 years of service)
Michael "Vinnie" Barbaruolo, Sioux Falls (14 years of service)
Gary Engel, Rapid City (40 years of service)

Employee Spotlight

New Hires/Transfers/Promotions

FY 2021: July- Dec., 2020 (list by anniversary date)

Zachary Nevitt, Engineer I Pierre - New Hire Erin Muldoon, Erin Engineer II Pierre - New Hire Erik Sikora, Right of Way Specialist Pierre - Promotion Tatum Anderson, Lead Hwy Maint. Work. Sturgis - Promotion Gene Nelson, Right of Way Specialist Sioux Falls - New Hire Dustin Hackens, Hwy Maint. Worker Rapid City - New Hire Farrell, Robert Engineer I Rapid City - New Hire David Lane, Hwy Maint. Worker Yankton - New Hire Margo McDowell, Engineer III Pierre - Transfer Jason Baker, Engineer IV Rapid City - Reclassification Travis Bergeson, Hwy Maint. Worker Sisseton - New Hire Cody Ulmer, Hwy Maint. Worker Huron - Lateral Transfer Michael Rogers, Journey Transp. Tech Rapid City - Transfer Kevin Wiebers, Hwy Maint. Work. Lennox - Transfer Kyle McCucheon, Engineer II Custer - New Hire Tiffany Hanisch, Transp. Specialist I Pierre - New Hire Justin (Sid) Green, Journey Transp. Tech Pierre - New Hire Brady Dickerson, Hwy Maint. Work. Woonsocket - New Hire Daniel Trost, Hwy Maint. Worker Flandreau - New Hire Brian McPhail, Hwy Maint. Worker Sioux Falls - New Hire Austin Hoffman, Hwy Maint. Worker Aberdeen - New Hire Cameron McKibbon, Engineer I Pierre - New Hire Andrew Hatheway, Hwy Maint. Worker Murdo - New Hire Monte Meier, Transportation Specialist I Pierre - Promotion John Pearson, Hwy Maint. Work. Deadwood - New Hire Shane Thorstenson, Hwy Maint. Work. Selby - New Hire Courtney Hook, Engineer III Pierre - Relcassification Craig Strait, Hwy Maintenance Worker Murdo - New Hire Jonathan Egge, CAD Technician Pierre - New Hire Jordan Nelson, Engineer I Winner - Transfer Andrew Livermont, Hwy Maint. Worker Pierre - New Hire Steven Withers, Hwy Maint. Worker Pierre - New Hire Brenda Flottmeyer, Engineer IV Rapid City - Reclassification Dallas DeBoer, Hwy Maint. Worker Sioux Falls - New Hire Phillip Dudley, Hwy Maint. Worker Junction City - New Hire Danae Berman, Accounting Assistant Pierre - New Hire Michael Johnson, Hwy Maint. Work. Aberdeen - New Hire Mary Hoyt, Accountant II Pierre - Promotion Mary Martin, Journey Trans. Tech. Mobridge - New Hire Torsten Van Heerde, Journey Trans. Tech. Abd. - New Hire Rich Leners, Transportation Specialist II Pierre - New Hire Ryan Degen, Equipment Tech. Mitchell - Promotion Brad Horstman, Trans. Project Mgr. Winner - Promotion Sharon Ferry, Accountant/Auditor I Pierre - New Hire Dan Drake, Engineer II Sioux Falls - New Hire Virgil Beckum, Hwy Maint. Work. Woonsocket - New Hire Matthew Lacey, Engineer II Pierre - New Hire James Leslie, Lead Hgwy Maint. Work. Pierre - New Hire

Zachary Geigle, Hwy Maint. Worker Pierre - New Hire Cheri Bartlett, Right of Way Specialist Pierre - Promotion James Bossert, Hwy Maint. Worker Winner - Transfer Bruce Zebroski, Hwy Maint. Worker Gettysburg - New Hire Adrianna Barton, Program Assistant II Pierre - New Hire Wyatt Krumvieda, Hwy Maint. Worker Plankinton - New Hire Bradley Golay, Equipment Technician Sioux Falls - New Hire Chris Bliss, Engineer I Belle Fourche - Promotion LeRay Swedeen, Lead Hwy Maint. Worker Clark - Promotion Colton Eck, Journey Transportation Tech Belle Fourche - New Hire Kevin Bergman, Journey Transportation Tech Rapid City - Promotion Nate Buscher, Engineer III Pierre - Transfer Tanner Knutson, Hwy Maint. Worker Beresford - Transfer James Hahne, Journey Transportation Tech Belle Fourche - New Hire Carrie Croxall, Sr. Secretary Pierre - New Hire Jesse Thuringer, Hwy Maintenance Worker Plankinton - New Hire Kayla Hernandez, Journey Trans. Tech Rapid City - New Hire Tyler Green, Equipment Management Specialist Pierre - Promotion Kyle Ford, Lead Hwy Maint. Worker Deadwood - Promotion Shane Pullman, Sr. Trial Attorney Rapid City - New Hire Deanna Lehrkamp, Sr. Secretary Pierre - New Hire Todd Gullickson, Highway Maintenance Worker Murdo - New Hire Makayla Campbell, Journey Transportation Tech Pierre - Transfer Les Winsell, Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Pierre - Promotion Glenn Groethe, Hwy Maintenance Worker Junction City - New Hire Patricia Devitt, Accounting Manager II Pierre - Promotion Seth Goembel, Hwy Maint. Worker Sioux Falls - New Hire Christopher Novak, Hwy Maint. Worker Rapid City - New Hire Chad Babcock, Environmental Scientist III Pierre - Transfer Cody Allen, Lead Highway Maintenance Worker Martin - Promotion Aaron Storms, Secretary Pierre - New Hire John Smith, Hwy Maint. Worker Mission - New Hire Benjamin Moennig, Transportation Specialist II Pierre - New Hire Nicholas Mallon, Journey Trans. Technician Huron - New Hire Julie Stevenson, Strategic Comm. Coordinator Pierre - New Hire Jonathan Haskell, Journey Trans. Technician Mitchell - New Hire Thomas Mino Jr., Hwy Maint. Work. Clark - New Hire Cody Herrboldt, Hwy Maintenance Worker Menno - New Hire Cody Lorenz, Engineer III Pierre - Reclassification Andrew Dickinson, Accountant II Pierre - New Hire Cory Taggart, Hwy Maint. Worker Sioux Falls - New Hire Nathan Paul, Engineer I Sioux Falls - New Hire Terri Boyle, Accountant/Auditor I Pierre - Promotion Evan Haugh, Engineer I Pierre - New Hire Damian Robol, Hwy Maint. Worker Presho - New Hire Katrina Davidson, Engineer I Pierre - New Hire Kevin Kayser, Journey Trans. Technician Aberdeen - New Hire Tyler Two Eagle, Journey Trans. Technician Aberdeen - New Hire

Employee Spotlight Employee Longevity for January 1 - December 31, 2020 (list by anniversary date) Name (# of years) position

Mavis Tooker (45) Part-room Technician Scott Olson (25) Survey Crew Chief/Chief Driller Joey Feller (35) Engineering Manager III Loren Haynes (25) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Donel Lemler (20) Region Operations Technician Kelly Armfield (30) Engineer III Timothy Blow (20) Equipment Shop Foreman Levi Duncan (20) Project Technician Ricky Farris (20) Hwy Maintenance Worker Edwin Koopman (35) Project Technician Mark Peterson (20) Administrator Alice Whitebird (35) Environmental Scientist III Clarence Bowman (20) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Bonnie Olson (20) Management Analyst Jonathan Liebe (20) Hwy Maintenance Worker Robert Hansen (30) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Todd Hertel (30) Engineering Manager III Robert Smith (30) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Ray Haenfler (20) Equipment Technician Kevin Pavlicek (25) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Noel Clocksin (30) Engineer III Thomas Grannes (30) Engineering Manager II Gregg Ulmer (30) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Rick Gordon (30) Engineering Manager II David Hempel (40) Sr. Right-of-Way Specialist Steve Weige (20) Transportation Project Manager Robert Lentsch (30) Project Technician Alan Zens (30) Equipment Technician

James Bossert (20) Hwy Maintenance Worker June Hansen (35) Civil Rights Program Specialist Matthew Stone (35) Engineer IV Kenneth Marks (35) Engineering Manager I Keith Doyle (20) Project Technician Roger Flint (20) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Michael Will (20) Engineer III Brenda Thomas (20) Transportation Specialist I Joel Finney (20) Equipment Technician Kirby Ringling (20) Hwy Maintenance Worker Brian Wenisch (20) Transportation Project Manager Rodney Gall (40) Engineering Manager III Bruce Crumb (40) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker David Madden (35) Engineering Manager II Kim Salzsieder (25) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Danl Wipf (30) Region Operations Technician Ray McLaughlin (30) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Orlando Maldonado (20) Project Technician Lance Birger (20) Engineer III Mark Bates (20) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Rick Walton (35) Hwy Maintenance Supervisor Bradley Huffman (30) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Greg Brosz (30) Region Operations Technician Lana Lambert (30) Transportation Analyst Joel Jundt (35) Interim Secretary Brian Versluys (20) Lead Hwy Maintenance Worker Tucker Dummer (20) Hwy Maintenance Worker

December Mentoring Minute By June Hansen

"Hoping the New Year brings you health and happiness!"

We see this (or a similar phrase) on Christmas cards or letters every year. As we ponder this wish of good health, I'm sure most of us instantly think of physical health. Why? Maybe it is because physical health (or lack thereof) is easy to see. What about emotional health? In this very different (Covid) holiday season we need to focus not only on physical health, but emotional health as well. Do you have young children who have been distance learning and unable to connect with their friends? Do you have an elderly parent or grandparent dealing with loneliness from isolation?

The December Mentoring videos discuss feelings we all may be experiencing this time of year. Please take a few minutes to click and watch the videos. Here's to an emotionally healthy New Year!

Cone Health: Strategies for Managing Remote Learning Stress & Separation Anxiety for Caregivers and Students

https://sdakdot.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/video/8e4a4ad3-1365-43c6-8e73-36828525779e

Guy Winch's Ted talk: **"Why we all need to practice emotional first aid"** https://sdakdot.csod.com/ui/lms-learning-details/app/video/3add62c9-1c2f-4428-99fd-0bd93d0e9c4a

Both videos are in the LMS to view at any time. Remember... make time for mentoring!!

